

2000

POLICY MEMORANDUM 18

SUBJECT: Park Ranger Training Program

18-1. Purpose. This Policy Memorandum presents Construction-Operations Division policy and procedures implementing HQUSACE guidance concerning training for park rangers. The ranger training program is designed to:

- a. Develop the park ranger as a professional employee through formal courses and on-the-job training concurrent with duties at a Sacramento District Civil Works Project.
- b. Develop an understanding and appreciation of the public need for Civil Works projects and the recreational opportunities and natural resources management required at these areas.
- c. Prepare the park ranger for advancement to a higher grade or to management positions within Sacramento District or with the Corps of Engineers nationwide. Career options to which park rangers may aspire in Sacramento District include:

- Chief, Operations Technical Branch, GS-13
- Project Manager, Northern/Southern Operations Area Office, GS-13
- Park Manager, GS-12
- Park Ranger, Operations Technical Branch, GS-12
- Park Ranger, GS-11
- Regulatory Branch, GS-11, GS-12
- Environmental Resources Branch, GS-11, GS-12

Commensurate positions are available at other Corps Districts and Divisions and at HQUSACE.

18-2. Applicability. This training program applies to all permanent employees assigned to the Park Ranger GS0025 job series.

18-3. References. ER 1130-2-540 and EP 1130-2-540 1996; and ER 1130-2-550 and EP 1130-2-550 dated 15 November 1996.

18-4 Policy. It is Construction-Operations Division policy to provide all permanent park rangers in the GS0025 job series the training opportunities outlined in this memorandum.

18-5. Responsibilities.

a. District. Operations Technical Branch (OTB) will monitor the park ranger training program for compliance with policy and coordinate the District Office rotational ranger training segment.

b. Area Manager. The area manager will ensure that subordinate park managers provide the training outlined in this memorandum. The area manger will review the record of training (Appendix A)

when approving promotional recommendations.

c. Park Manager. The park manager is the local coordinator of the ranger training program. The park manager is responsible for ensuring that all permanent park rangers receive a copy of this memorandum and that training needs are included in each ranger's Individual Development Plan (IDP). The park manager will develop a time-specific schedule and ensure that employees have adequate time and resources to accomplish all program requirements. The park manager will ensure that IDP=s and annual TAPES evaluations are submitted to the area manager.

d. Park Ranger. Park rangers are responsible for identifying their formal and on-the-job training needs to their park manager and documenting their needs in their IDP.

18-6. Basic Program.

a. The Park Ranger Training Program includes a three-year minimum period of formal and practical instruction (Appendix A). It is primarily designed for a park ranger entering at the GS-05 level. Upon successful completion of the first level of the training program, a ranger will be eligible, upon the project manager=s recommendation, for promotion to GS-07. After completion of the next level of training and upon a favorable recommendation by the park manager, a ranger will be eligible for promotion to GS-09. Upon completion of the Park Ranger Training Program, a ranger will be eligible for promotion to park ranger positions at the GS-11 level.

b. Should the ability to attend or schedule required training be beyond the control of the park ranger and the park manager, (i.e. lack of funds, course availability), the park manager may submit a written request to the area manager for an exception to the training completion policy. Upon approval by the area manager, the park ranger will be eligible for promotion with the understanding that the required training will be scheduled and completed as soon as practical. Substitutions in training requirements contained in Appendix A must be approved by the area manager.

18-7. Entry at an Advanced Level. Work experience, education and training may justify entry into the training program at an advanced level. The Human Resources Directorate will make determination of qualification for entry at an advanced level with the park manager making the final decision, based upon a review of knowledge, skills and abilities as submitted by the applicant during the recruitment process. Employees entering at the GS-07 level and above will be enrolled in the training program based on specific individual needs that will be identified in their IDP.

18-8. Failure to Meet Requirements. Failure to complete any portion of the training program could delay an employee's promotion or lead to removal from the program. Employees are evaluated on a semi-annual basis and the evaluation documented. Park managers will certify retention or separation of park rangers serving a probationary period during the ninth month of employment. Park rangers with "unsuccessful@ evaluations will not be promoted to the next higher grade until deficiencies are corrected. If the deficiencies

cannot be corrected by the time of the next appraisal, the employee will be removed from the training program by reassignment to a position for which the employee is qualified or removed from government service.

18-9. Reference Library.

a. A reference center, containing the following documents, will be maintained at each project office:

AR 190-29	ER 1110-2-400	EP 1130-2-540
AR 200-1	ER 1130-2-500	EP 1130-2-550
AR 200-3	ER 1130-2-530	Title 36 CFR Part 327
EM 385-1-1	ER 1130-2-540	Standard Operating Procedures
EM 1110-1-400	ER 1130-2-550	Policy Memorandums
EM 1110-2-410	ER 1165-2-400	Recreation Policy Letters
EM 385-1-1	EP 200-2-3	Project Master Plan
ER 200-2-3	EP 1130-2-500	Project OMP
		1130 series Engineer Circulars

b. Additionally, the reference center will contain a list of other pertinent documents (such as Dam Safety Plan, Operations and Maintenance Manuals, Graphics Standards Manual, Sign Standards Manual, Hazardous Materials Action and Contingency Plans, Field Office Assistants Administrative Procedures, etc.) The reference center will be centrally located and available to all employees at all times.

c. Park rangers are expected to demonstrate a working knowledge of all documents contained in the reference center within the first 12 months of employment. The park manager will keep all reference material current.

18-10. Formal Training. Formal training may be accomplished through various methods. With the increased availability of correspondence courses, videotapes, computer programs and other on-site training, off-site training may not always be necessary for completing the required and elective courses. As new training sources are identified, park managers will be notified of their availability.

18-11. Mandatory Courses. Mandatory courses are prescribed by law or regulation. Mandatory courses must be completed within the prescribed training period. No substitutions are permitted. Course scheduling difficulties will be resolved with the area manager. Mandatory courses for each level of the training program are displayed in Appendix A.

18-12. Management Directed Courses. Management directed courses are prescribed to meet mission requirements of the project. Management directed courses may be waived if the ranger demonstrates competence in the subject. Substitutions are allowed to better serve the needs of the project. The project manager will resolve course-scheduling difficulties. Management directed training for each level of the training

program is displayed in Appendix A.

18-13. Elective Courses. Elective courses are those courses that fulfill specific project needs or career development needs of the ranger. Examples of available elective courses follow. Full advantage should be taken of correspondence courses, workshops, conferences, seminars and university and college classes. After completion of the training program, park rangers should continue professional development by identifying elective training needs in their IDP=s. The park manager will resolve course-scheduling difficulties.

Project Wild	Project Learning Tree
Hazardous Materials Spills	Pest Control Quality Assurance
Photography	Boating Safety and Enforcement
Campground Design and Rehabilitation	Conflict resolution
Team building skills	Time management
Cultural awareness	Visitation Estimating and Reporting
Automated User Permit System (AUPS)	System (VERS)
National Recreation Reservation	Operations and Maintenance Business
Service (NRRS)	Information Link (OMBIL)

18-14. On-the-Job Training. On-the-job training should encompass as broad a spectrum of duties as possible. The park ranger and the park manager will meet a minimum of every six months to review and discuss the ranger=s progress in completing the on-the-job training. Duties to be performed will include, but not be limited to those appearing in Appendix A. Additional duties may be added at the discretion of the park manager.

a. Operational Activities. On-the-job training will be conducted to assure that the ranger has opportunity to work and become familiar with all aspects of project management. All members of the project staff may be utilized in accomplishing the training. The ranger should participate in all operational programs from patrol of project lands and waters to updating operational management plans.

b. Maintenance Activities. On-the-job training will be conducted to assure that the park ranger develops a working knowledge of project and dam related maintenance programs. While rangers should not routinely be assigned to maintenance type duties nor be considered as part of the maintenance crew, this phase of the training program will prepare the employee for future management positions. As a minimum the ranger is expected to become functional in basic preventive maintenance programs, basic trouble-shooting of common project maintenance problems, piezometer reading, weather data reading and recording and emergency gate changes. The ranger should receive at least a one-week assignment to dam operation duties and a two-week assignment in the maintenance program that may run concurrently at the discretion of the park manager.

c. Office Administration. As a minimum the park ranger will receive a two-week assignment in office administration. This requirement may be completed over an extended period of time at the discretion of the park manager.

18-15. Developmental Assignments. In order to assure a broad base of practical experience, the park ranger must be assigned to at least two Corps of Engineers= projects prior to promotion to a GS-09. Permanent reassignment is preferred. However, a temporary reassignment to another District project may be authorized by the area manager in special situations if no per diem or travel expenses are required. The temporary reassignment shall be for a period of not less than 90 days. Prior to promotion to a GS-9, the park ranger will spend 60 to 90 days assigned to a District, Division, Headquarters or Area Office. Operations Technical Branch is the most common location for this developmental assignment. The ranger will be assigned an advisor during the developmental period and given routine and special assignments common to the particular office. Selection and scheduling of district office assignments will be coordinated with the project manager, area manager and OTB. Upon completion of the developmental assignment, the ranger will submit an evaluation of the assignment including suggestions for training improvement. All permanent rangers are eligible for developmental assignments regardless of grade level.

18-16. Membership in Professional Organizations. Rangers are encouraged to join and participate in natural resource management related professional organizations. Such organizations offer a wealth of interagency information, conferences and training courses that may not otherwise be available to park rangers.

18-17. Evaluations and Appraisals. Park rangers will submit a summary of training activities and suggestions for improving their training to the project manager immediately following each six months of the training program. Upon completion of developmental assignments, a written performance evaluation will be prepared by ranger's developmental advisor and forwarded to the ranger's park manager.

18-18. District Certification. Upon successful completion of all requirements through the GS-9 level of the park ranger training program, the park manager will submit a completed copy of Appendix A through the area manager to OTB and request a certificate of completion. OTB will prepare a certificate of completion for signature by the Commander and arrange for an appropriate presentation.

18-19. Effective Date. This memorandum is effective immediately and supersedes all District instructions implementing the park ranger training program.

KAREN DURHAM-AGUILERA P.E.

APPENDIX A

MANDATORY, MANAGEMENT DIRECTED, ELECTIVE AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

ALL PERMANENT RANGERS

Mandatory Training	Completed	Supervisor
Visitor Assistance (PROSPECT course)		
Dam Safety Assurance		
Personal Protection (24-hours minimum)		
Boat Operator		
Defensive Driving		
Responding to Emergencies or Emergency Response (Red Cross)		
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation		
Intern Leadership Development (SCEP only)		
Required Reading		
AR 190-29 Misdemeanors and Violation Notices		
AR 200-1 Environmental Protection and Enhancement		
AR 200-3 Environmental Compliance		
EM 1110-2-400 Recreation Planning and Design Criteria		
EM 1110-2-410 Planning and Design – Access and Circulation		
EM 385-1-1 Safety and Health Requirements Manual		
ER 200-2-3 Environmental Compliance Policies		
ER 1110-2-400 Design of Recreation Sites, Areas and Facilities		
ER 1130-2-500 Partners and Support (Policies)		
ER 1130-2-530 Flood Control O&M Policies		
ER 1130-2-540 Environmental Stewardship O&M (Policies)		

ER 1130-2-550 Recreation O&M (Policies)		
ER 1165-2-400 Recreation Planning, Development & Mgt		
EP 200-2-3 Environmental Compliance (Procedures)		
EP 1165-2-500 Partners and Support (Procedures)		
EP 1130-2-540 Environmental Stewardship O&M (Procedures)		
EP 1130-2-550 Recreation O&M Policy (Procedures)		
Title 36 CFR Part 327 Rules and Regulations		
Standard Operation Procedures		
Policy Memorandums		
Recreation Policy Letters and 1130 Series Engineer Circulars		
Project Master Plan		
Project Operational Management Plan		

GS-5 PARK RANGER

Mandatory Training	Completed	Supervisor
Visitor Assistance (SPD course may be used until PROSPECT obtained)		
Management Directed Training		
Technical Writing/Communication		
On-the-Job Training		
Attend Federal Magistrate Court		
Process Title 36 Violation Warnings and Notices		
Proficiency in computer applications		
Proficiency in radio communication and operation		
Land and water patrol		
Tool box safety meetings		
Proficiency in fee collection		
Traffic meter data collection and meter maintenance		
Basic recreation area maintenance and troubleshooting		
Proficiency in incident report preparation		
Proficiency in requisition and purchase order preparation		
Proficiency in contract scopes-of-work preparation		
Participation in boundary inspections		
Proficiency in MARKS and correspondence management		
Electives		

GS-7 PARK RANGER

Management Directed Training	Completed	Supervisor
O&M Contracting (PROSPECT)		
Interpretive Services (PROSPECT)		
Communications - Public Speaking		
On-the-Job Training		
Update OMP chapter		
Proficiency in interpretive programming		
Proficiency in scheduling and conducting water safety program		
Proficiency in conducting safety meetings		
Proficiency at collecting and transmitting visitation data		
Proficiency at conducting boundary inspections		
Participation in resource stewardship program		
Developmental assignment at another project (if not by PCS)		
Electives		

GS-9 PARK RANGER

Mandatory		
Developmental assignment in Area, District, Division or HQ		
Management Directed Training	Completed	Supervisor
Supervisory development		
Communications and public involvement		
Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD)		
Cultural diversity		
On-the-Job Training		
Budget preparation for a functional area		
Compile and submit NRMS		
Schedule and conduct interpretive and outreach programs for FY		
Coordinate visitor assistance program for FY		
Coordinate resource management program for FY		
Coordinate recreation program for FY		
Conduct customer satisfaction surveys		
Administer pest management program		
Prepare news releases		
Prepare responses to public inquiries		
Proficiency in encroachment detection and resolution		
Proficiency in inspection of outgranted lands		
Proficiency in sign maintenance and management		
Electives		

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GS-11 PARK RANGER

Mandatory Training	Completed	Supervisor
Developmental assignment in Area, District, Division or HQ		
Supervisory development		
Visitor Assistance Management and Policy (PROSPECT)		
Management Directed Training		
Advanced O&M Contracts (PROSPECT)		
Public awareness/conflict resolution		
On-the-Job Training		
Proficiency in dam operation		
Proficient in preparation of one-time contracts		
Proficient in responding to complaints		
Proficient in preparation of position papers		
Prepare real estate reports of availability		
Conduct real estate AMP review		
Proficiency in conducting meetings and discussions		
Represent project at interagency and public meetings		
Proficiency in recreation marketing		
Develop and implement recreation and/or resource budget		
Implement ERGO on project		
Conduct employee orientations and briefings		
Recommend employee performance evaluations		

Recruit and fill temporary vacancies		
Schedule personnel, equipment and resources		
Electives		